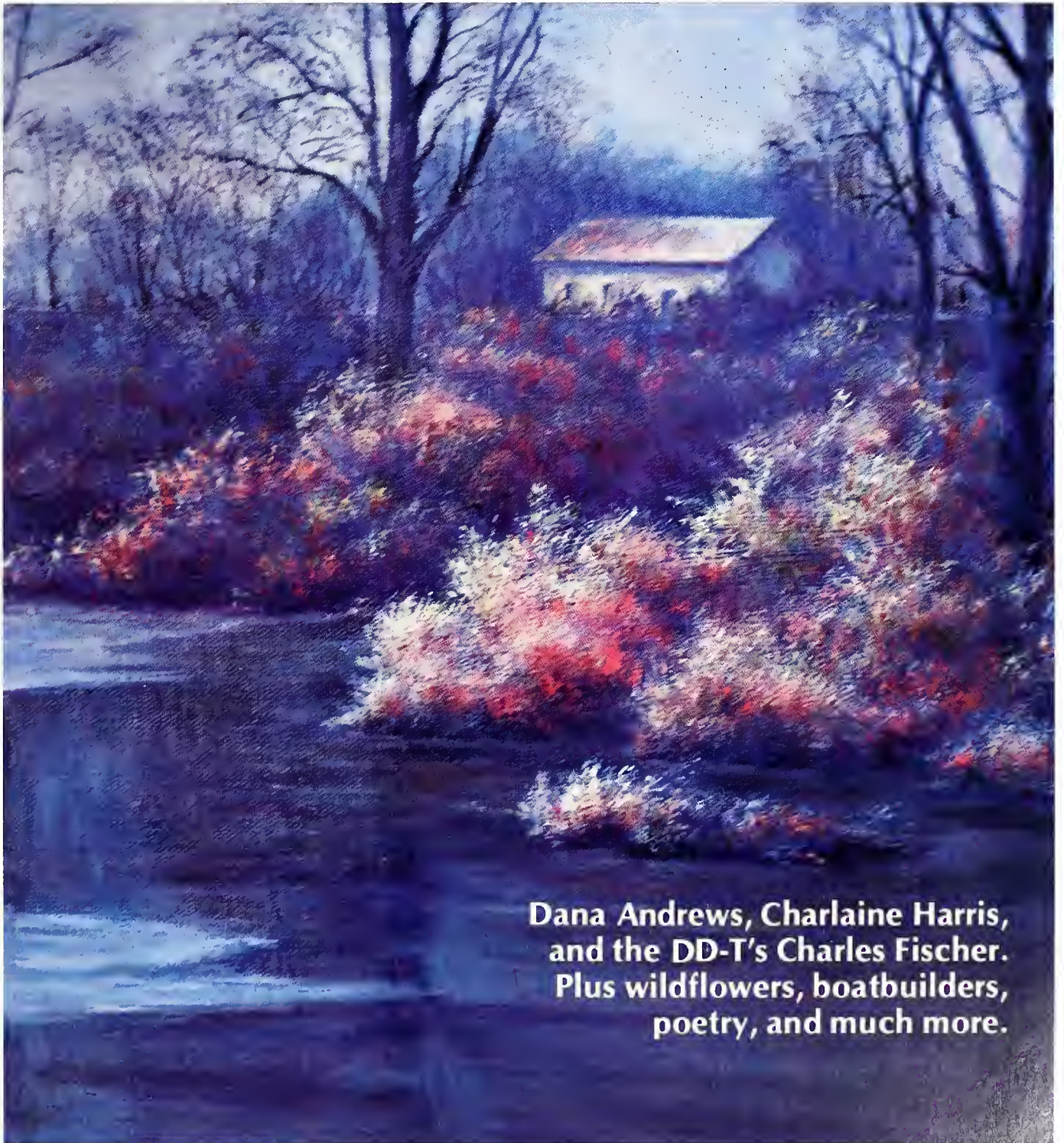


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Fall 1981 • One Dollar



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EVENTS

OCTOBER

October 1-15

DeGrummond Collection of
Childrens Book Illustrations,
Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale,
MS

October 1-31

Rowan Oak pictorial exhibit, Delta
State Library, Cleveland, MS

October 3

Octoberfest, German festival,
Community Center, Biloxi, MS

Gateway to the Delta Festival, arts,
crafts, tour of homes, Yazoo City,
MS

October 1-4

"Same Time Next Year," Delta
Center Stage Playhouse, Greenville,
MS 8:00. Sunday Matinee Oct. 4,
2:30.

October 4-28

Former students show, Deloach,
Bain, Spindler, Russell, Wright
Building, Delta State University,
Cleveland, MS

October 5-10

Fire Prevention Week-Fireman of
the Year Award, by Insurance
Women of Greenville, Greenville
Mall, Greenville, MS

October 9

Great River Road Crafts Fair,
Convention Center, Natchez, MS

October 10

Truck Show, custom-made trucks,
Greenville Mall, Greenville, MS

October 12

Greenville Symphony Concert,
Gordon MacRae, Greenville High
School Auditorium, Greenville, MS

October 15

New Shakespeare Company of San
Francisco performing "As You Like
It," Broom Auditorium, 8:00 p.m.,
Delta State University, Cleveland,
MS

October 16-19

"Music Man" Admission by season
membership only, Greenwood Little
Theatre, Greenwood, MS

October 17

Wrist Wrestling Contest, entry fee;
trophies will be awarded.
Greenville Mall, Greenville, MS

October 17-18

Fall Flea Market, Liberty Park,
Natchez, MS

October 19-24

Home & Energy Show, local
businesses, Greenville Mall,
Greenville, MS

October 27 - Nov. 27

Needlework Exhibit, Cottonlandia Museum, Greenwood, MS

October 26-31

Spook House, Greenville Mall, Civic Center, Greenville, MS

October 29-31

Arts & Crafts, Greenville Mall, Greenville, MS

October 31

Set Design Workshop, small fee charged, Greenwood Little Theatre, Greenwood, MS

NOVEMBER**November 1-25**

Bill Beckwith, sculptor, and Andrew Bucci, painter, Wright Art Building, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS

November 4-5

Mistletoe Marketplace, sponsored by Junior League of Jackson, Mississippi Trade Mart, \$2 admission, Jackson, MS

November 7

Preview of Christmas, fashion show, Greenville Mall, Greenville, MS

November 9

Greenville Symphony Concert, featuring Elaine Martin, harpist, Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS

November 13

Norman Louboff Choir, Broom Auditorium, 8:00 p.m., Delta State University, Cleveland, MS

November 14

Mini-Concert by Greenville Symphony Orchestra, Greenville Mall

November 15

Delta Music Association presents the Empire Brass Quartet, 3:00 p.m., Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS

November 21

Santa arrives, Greenville Mall, Greenville, MS

November 30

Christmas Parade, Clarksdale, MS

DECEMBER**December 1**

Christmas Parade, Downtown, Grenada, MS

December 2

"The Littlest Angel," sponsored by Crosstie Arts Council, Broom Auditorium, 8:00 p.m., Delta State University, Cleveland, MS

December 1-24

Choirs from the Ark-La-Miss will perform Christmas music around the fountain area, Greenville Mall, Greenville, MS

December 1-28

Paintings by the Sam Drego Watercolor Society, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS

December 1-31

Jamie Cuming-Antique Toys, Bolivar County Library, Cleveland, MS

December 5-18

Student Show, Wright Art Building, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS

December 7

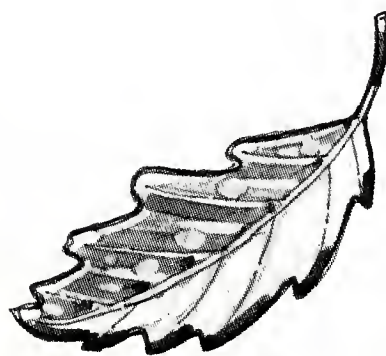
Clarksdale Christmas Parade and Fireworks Show, 7 p.m., Clarksdale, MS

December 8

Deer Creek Christmas Pageant and Parade, Leland, MS

December 10-12

"Absurd Person Singular," admission by season membership only, Greenwood Little Theatre, Greenwood, MS



The Fireside Shop Christmas Open House

November 8
1-6 p.m.

November 9
9:30-5 p.m.

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Lillian Smith, Mary Ross
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Coleman Warner

Art Direction
Delta Design Group, Greenville

Production Artist
Bill Jackson

Photography
Jody Correro
Noel Workman
Virginia Rayner
Rebecca Hood-Adams
Ted Solomon
Katherine Lewis
Coleman Warner

Circulation Manager
Julia Eckert

Editorial Board
William LaForge, Chairman
Sammy Britt
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Leo Crook
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U.S. Walker

Advertising Sales Office
Main Office, P.O. Box B-3
Delta State University
Cleveland, MS 38733
(601) 846-1976

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FORUM: A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

This "Forum" is a direct, naked appeal for the support and the help of **Delta Scene's** subscribers and readers. Based on information we have received, in both verbal and written form, you believe **Delta Scene** is a quality, unique, worthwhile publication. Those of us associated with the magazine wholeheartedly agree. No other publication in the state exists solely to publicize and to characterize a certain geographical region as does **Delta Scene**. Certainly the Delta area lends itself to such an undertaking, and for that reason **Delta Scene** should be published.

This being the case, **Delta Scene** needs to grow in terms of the number of its subscribers and readership. Currently, there are approximately 700 people who subscribe to the magazine. Quite frankly, I believe this figure could, and should, be larger. For that reason, we at **Delta Scene** are asking our subscribers, former subscribers, and casual readers to help us make the magazine grow.

The reason **Delta Scene** needs more subscribers is quite simple: publication costs in the past several years have increased dramatically. Let me assure you at this point that the magazine is not in trouble or in danger of ceasing publication! However, in order to continue our acknowledged quality and excellence, we need more subscribers and readers. The bulk of **Delta Scene's** income, of course, is derived from advertising sales. But advertisers understandably want their product or service to come to the attention of as many people as possible. Consequently, they are quite interested in the number of subscribers — potential customers — to a publication such as **Delta Scene**. Simply put, the more subscribers/readers a magazine enjoys, the more willing is a businessman or firm to advertise in that magazine.

As most of you, our present subscribers, are aware **Delta Scene** is a nonprofit publication, that is, our income is used exclusively to attempt to cover production expenses. Delta State University, the magazine's sponsor, subsidizes all other costs of the publication. In view of the current economic trends in the state, though, monies appropriated to Delta State and other institutions of higher learning are being tightened by legislative actions. For that reason, we at **Delta Scene** are determined to help "carry the load" to a greater extent in order to aid the University and to guarantee the continued excellence of the magazine.

So we need your support and help. In fact, there is no one else who can help but you. Urge your friends to subscribe to **Delta Scene**. Give **Delta Scene** to friends and relatives as a gift. In doing so, you can aid those of us associated with the magazine as we work to continue the publication of a top quality and essential product.

— Curt Lamar

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An Interview With CHARLAINE HARRIS

by Mary D. Ross

Mary Ross: Now that you have joined the ranks of Southern women writers, would you share your feelings about your Southern sisters and any influence they might have had on your life and your work.

Charlaine Harris: I think just the fact that Southern women do write has had a tremendous influence on my life and work. Unfortunately, they are not, maybe, as well known or only the greatest are as well known. I have run into interviewers who expect me to be Eudora Welty, and they are really surprised and the interview comes out very strange when they find out that I am not anything at all like that wonderful writer.

M.R.: Do you have a favorite female Southern writer?

C.H.: I think that Ann Rivers Siddons is good. I can't say that I have read her that much. I read the book, **The House Next Door**. She has written other books but that is her most recent book as far as I know, and I thought that was very well done. It is a very frightening book. It is really frightening.

M.R.: At what stage in your life did you realize that you wanted to be a writer?

C.H.: When I learned how to hold a pencil. How to read. That settled it. I have always wanted to write. I don't think there's anything better to do. I love writing and I really hope that I never have to go back to work at the **Press Register**. It's a great place to work, but I like writing full time. It really suits me much better than pasting up ads, though it does not pay as well.

M.R.: Would you say that your jobs at the **Clarksdale Press Register** and the **Bolivar Commercial** were preparatory for your career?

C.H.: They certainly gave me some interesting background. I think I learned a lot about. . . I did not write at those papers. Now, if I had written at them, I could probably say in a flash. I did dirty work. I caught the papers when they came off the press. I got \$1.60 an hour.

M.R.: Since you worked in production, how did you progress from paste-up artist to author?

C.H.: Well, I always thought of myself as an author. Nobody else did. I always knew what I was. Reporters are, unfortunately, kinda glutting the market right now and that is one reason I never became a reporter. There were so many other people who were better qualified to

*Charlaine Harris, a native of Tunica, lives with her husband, Hal Schultz, in Orangeburg, South Carolina. She is the author of **Sweet and Deadly**, a mystery which is her first published work.*

Harris worked as a typesetter for The Clarksdale Press Register and also for the Bolivar Commercial in Cleveland.

The following interview with Charlaine Harris was conducted at the Carnegie Public Library in Clarksdale while she was on a publicity sweep through the Delta promoting her book.



Photograph by Katherine Lewis

take a job. I would have liked to have been. As it turned out, I always thought of myself as a writer. I always thought of everything else I did as just something to pay the bills until I got my go. As it turned out I did get that opportunity. So many people don't that can, and I couldn't write when I had to come home after working eight hours a day. I tried, and I couldn't. I don't have that much stamina. I couldn't do it.

M.R.: How long did it take you to write **Sweet and Deadly**?

C.H.: Nine or ten months.

M.R.: Did you have any connections with your publisher?

C.H.: I met a wonderful woman who used to work at Houghton Mifflin Company. She ran a writer's workshop in St. Louis where I lived right after I married. She still had some friends at Houghton Mifflin and asked them if they would read the book. Getting the book read is half the trouble. Writing the book is no problem. Getting the book published is a lot of trouble. So we sent it in. They did read it and asked for a lot of revisions, but nothing that I objected to. I wouldn't have objected too much. I would have

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Portrait of a Famous Mississippian

Dana Andrews: An Interview

by Ted Solomon

In 1976, Delta State University's Delta Playhouse and the Cleveland Crosstie Arts Council initiated a guest artist program which was to feature a well-known actor or actress in a theatre production. The Guest Artist Production was developed for two major reasons. First, the production would provide our students with an opportunity to work with a professional artist, thus enhancing their educational experience in theatre. Secondly, such a production would provide the campus and local communities with professional entertainment. In 1976, our first guest artist was actor Gary Collins who starred in "Send Me No Flowers." Other guests have included Barbara Sharma in "Bus Stop" and Arlene Dahl in "Forty Carats." In 1978, Gary Collins returned with wife Mary Ann Mobley to star in "Cabaret," which was produced by the DSU drama department, the Crosstie Arts Council, and also Delta State's music department. This past year's guest artist was veteran motion picture actor Dana Andrews, a native Mississippian who was featured in Thornton Wilder's "Our Town." During his stay in Cleveland, I had the opportunity to talk with Mr. Andrews about his long career in pictures. Following is my interview with actor, and Mississippian, Dana Andrews.

Photograph by Jody Carrero



Dana Andrews was born in Covington County, Mississippi, the third son of a Baptist minister. Mr. Andrews attended Sam Houston State Teachers College (now Sam Houston State University) in Huntsville, Texas, and graduated with a degree in Business Administration.

Mr. Andrews was the star in the long-running NBC-TV series, "Bright Promise" and has appeared in numerous top TV shows as a guest star. On Broadway, he appeared for one year with Anne Bancroft in "Two for the See-Saw" and has performed in many summer stock companies across the country.

A rehearsal break gives the cast an opportunity to listen to Mr. Andrews discuss his career. It also provides the students with a chance to ask questions about all aspects of professional theatre.

Ted Solomon: Is Delta State the first university you have visited to appear in a play as a guest artist?

Dana Andrews: No, I've done two university appearances. One in Florida at Florida State University and one in Kentucky at the University of Kentucky.

T.S.: Do you enjoy working with university students?

D.A.: Yes, very much. It is always enjoyable to work with young people and see how they are beginning to develop their talents. It's also something different and I always enjoy doing stage work. To see these young people performing in university theatre reminds me of how I began my career.

T.S.: Did you begin acting in college?

D.A.: Well, actually I started acting in grammar school. Back in those days we took "expression" lessons. My teacher, Mrs. Karen Fisher, gave me poems and rhymes and taught me how to say them — you know — giving them the correct meaning through expression. Then I did high school and college plays. While I was attending Sam Houston State Teachers College (now Sam Houston State University) I did two or so plays each year. It was there that a teacher/director, Dr. Stewart, told me that although I had prepared myself for a career in the business world he believed that I had the talents that would lend themselves to an acting career. But, I still took a job in the business field with Gulf Oil company. Well, it did not take long before I realized that even though I was successful in business, I was not happy and

decided to take Dr. Stewart's advice and try acting. So, I gave my notice and hitchhiked to California to "get into pictures," and nine years later, I did.

T.S.: What benefits do you think the students receive from participating in a guest artist production?

D.A.: I think, in most cases, a person who has had as much experience as I have, seventy-two motion pictures and Broadway, this has given me an opportunity to gain a great deal of knowledge about acting, the theatre, and movies. So, when a student participates in a guest artist show he or she can get some of the benefits of my knowledge and experience in the field. It also gives the students a chance to ask questions about acting, about the theatre, and making movies — about being in the business of professional acting. I enjoy seeing students who have a great deal of talent and enjoy working with them. I also try to encourage those whom I believe have the talent for acting to continue their study, and if they are interested, try acting as a profession. I think feedback from a person like myself who has been in the profession for a long time is very beneficial and very encouraging to the young actor or actress. In addition to the benefits that such a production offers the students that actually participate, I feel that this type of activity is good for the entire campus and local community. You know, Delta State is not what one would consider a large university, but here there is the interest in providing good entertainment and, at the same time, providing the theatre students with a good learning experience. I also think that you are very fortunate to have a community organization like Crosstie to help sponsor your

production. I know of many cities that are much larger than Cleveland that do not have such a group. Another thing, it's always encouraging to an actor, it is for me, to see people come to see the play. When the campus and local community are interested enough in the theatre to come see the play, the students react much the same way an individual would if he were opening on Broadway. It makes you feel good. And when a guest artist comes, the play draws larger audiences, at least that's what you hope (laughs). So, I think a production like this is good for the participants as well as the people who come to see the play.

T.S.: You are the second guest artist we have had on campus who is a native of Mississippi. (Mary Ann Mobley in 1978.) Where were you born?

D.A.: Well, I am a Mississippian of four years. I was born near Collins on my grandfather's farm. I was born in 1909 but did not know until 1942 where I actually was born. In 1942 I had to get a birth certificate for a movie I was about to make (the movie was shot on location at a United States Army base and it was required that Dana prove his U.S. citizenship) and, in doing so, discovered that I was born in a small community named Dont, Mississippi. It was just a post office and a general store, but that was the name of the birth place on my certificate. My friends have joked that the movie marquee should read, "Dana Andrews — Dont, Miss."

T.S.: You were honored by your hometown just a few years ago, is that correct?

D.A.: Yes, that's correct. In 1976 I was selected "Mississippian of the Year" and in 1978 the towns of Mt. Olive, Collins, and Seminary had two days, Friday and Saturday, called "Dana Andrews' Days." My wife, Mary, and I rode in a 1939 car in parades through each town. The strange thing was it was our 39th anniversary and here we were in a model 1939 car. Well, I was deeply touched by the reception that they had given to one of their own who had made it in the theatrical world. I also discovered that I had hundreds of cousins (laughs). James Speed, my grandfather, had four wives and had a number of children by each wife, so that multiplied into quite a number of Speeds over the years. Because of all my cousins, I always feel at home when I come back to Mississippi.

T.S.: Did you show a talent for acting as a young child?

D.A.: In many ways I guess I did. I was the son of a Baptist minister and three times a week I would see him get up before people and, in a manner of speaking, "perform." I learned a great deal about acting from him because I knew my father personally — father/son relationship — yet I would also see him play different roles while he was delivering his sermons. He would give, for example, a performance of the devil or some other person he was describing from the Bible. I saw how he used words, ideas, and sentimentality to move people emotionally and spiritually. Through this observation I think I learned some of the things which an actor needs to know. That is, how to use words and emotions to move people and move them to have feelings about the character you are portraying on stage. I think that this observation helped to develop some of the qualities which I later used as an actor. The ability to move people

emotionally is very important to an actor, and I believe that I learned this by watching my father.

T.S.: After leaving your job in the business world and going to Hollywood, just how did you get your first role in a picture?

D.A.: Well, as I said, it took nine years. The first thing you have to do is to find a place or theatre to work in so that you can show the Hollywood talent scouts that you have talent for the movies. You also need a good agent that will find and get you parts. The way I did this was by working in plays at the Pasadena Community Playhouse. I did quite a number of plays there and by doing these plays I further developed my acting talents as well as showed the "important" people that I had the talent to be a good screen actor. Many screen personalities started at the Pasadena Playhouse — Victor Mature and Tony Quinn were working there when I was doing plays. It was here that a talent scout saw me perform and got in touch with my agent. The scout wanted me to do a screen test, which is the first step toward the movies.

T.S.: What, exactly, is the major purpose of the screen test?

D.A.: The screen test is very important. It sometimes will determine whether or not you will ever be in pictures. The purpose of the test is to see just how you look on the screen. It sounds somewhat simple, but there is more to it actually. Some people are naturally photogenic — they look good on the screen. Sometimes an individual looks better on the screen than he does in real life. But the movie producers must see how you look, how you speak, and in general what is your screen appeal. If you look and sound okay, then possibly on to the movies, but if not — well!

T.S.: I can, of course, assume that your screen test was successful.

D.A.: (laughs) Well, after seventy-two movies, I guess you could say that. There is a funny story about the screen test. After the talent scout told my agent that he wanted me to do a test, my agent sent me a note with the scout's name and address. When I returned to my dressing room after a performance and found the note — well, I had never heard of this scout so I threw the note in the waste can. A few days later my agent called me and asked why I never got back to the scout for the screen test. You can imagine how I reacted. I almost missed the opportunity that I had come to Hollywood to find. As a matter of fact, I had decided to give myself one more year and if I had not made it in pictures by then, I was going to go back to the business world. But I did take the screen test and that led to the beginning of my career in the picture business. I signed a contract with Samuel Goldwyn and two years later Goldwyn divided that contract with Twentieth-Century Fox. So I was under contract with two movie studios at the same time, which lasted for the next ten years.

T.S.: What was your first role?

D.A.: My first role was a small one in a picture called, "The Westerner" starring Gary Cooper. I only had one line or so. The picture was about farmers going out west and the trouble they were having with the cowboys and

ranchers. I played a farm worker and my "big" scene in the picture was when I was working, putting posts in the ground. Well, about that time a group of cowboys rode up and began to shoot at us. My big line — I'll never forget it — was "I hired out for farm work not a civil war" (laughs).

T.S.: How did you go from this small role in "The Westerner" to become a leading man and a star in pictures?

D.A.: Well, you continue to do parts and hope that they (producers) will see you and offer larger roles. If you have talent and the public likes what they see, then you become a star.

T.S.: When did you become a star and what criteria are used that establish an actor as such?

D.A.: The old saying "a star is made, not born" is very true. I had made fifteen films after "The Westerner," which was in 1939, before I really was classified as a star. In 1944 I made a picture entitled "The Purple Heart" and in 1945 a picture entitled "Laura." It was the success of these two movies that made me a star. As far as the criteria used to determine star status, the system used, while not an exact science, is a good one. When there is a picture made that has a fair plot and is made on a relatively small budget, say five hundred thousand (back then you could make a picture for that amount), but the picture is released and grosses over one million — then you have a star. The actor who was featured in that film is the cause of the film's success. People come to see the actor rather than to see the film (story). So that's how I became classified as a star — the success of those two movies.

T.S.: What were your most productive years as a movie star?

D.A.: The 1940s were the years that I made a great number of my pictures. I guess the pictures that received good reviews and the ones that not only established me as a star but also helped sustain me as an actor were the ones done in the 40's.

T.S.: Looking back on the seventy-two movies, do you have one or two that are your favorites? And do you have a favorite role?

D.A.: There are several pictures that stand out in my mind as being both my favorite movie and my favorite roles. In 1942, I made "The Ox-Bow Incident" with Henry Fonda. I think this picture is one of the greatest documents made condemning group violence. I played the part of a man who was hanged because I, and another character played by Anthony Quinn, were accused of stealing cattle. But at the end of the picture, it is discovered that we were innocent. The picture is one of the best ones I've seen that deals with good people in a community who turn into a violent mob. This is one of the important pictures I had made to this date. The next movie that stands out in my mind was made only a few years later. In 1945, I played the part of a soldier returning from war in "The Best Years of Our Lives." This movie won nine Academy Awards, among them "Best Picture." These pictures were very important to me as an actor because they were successful ones and also pictures that provided me with two very important roles.

Of course, I can think of others that were also enjoyable to work in and they too were successful. I would include "Laura" with Gene Tierney, "Elephant Walk" with Elizabeth Taylor, "My Foolish Heart" with Susan Hayward, and "In Harm's Way" with John Wayne, among others, as being my favorites also. I guess all, or at least the majority, of the movies I made gave me a great deal of pleasure, but "Ox-Bow" and "Best Years" are my two favorites.

T.S.: Looking back over your career, are there any roles that you would have liked to have played?

D.A.: Well, that's a difficult question. I really can't think of any role like that. No, because if the role was that good, good enough for me to want to play it, I always would feel that the actor who did play it did the part so well that I could not have done better.

T.S.: You have worked with many well-known actors and actresses during your career; how were they personally? For example, Gary Cooper and John Wayne?

D.A.: Gary Cooper was much the same man off the screen as he was on. He was quiet, soft spoken and, I guess, I never heard him raise his voice. He had a great sense of humor and we would get together often and tell jokes, and so forth. Cooper was just another fellow and that's true of most all the people I worked with. This is true of John Wayne. John Wayne was a nice guy and fun to work with. There is a story about John Wayne's walk that I can relate to you. It seems that a stunt man said to Wayne, or Duke as we all called him, "Duke, you're a big man, and something that might give your characters added interest is the way you could walk. If you walked like a 'chorus girl,' you know, with a little swish. That would separate you from all the other big men in the movies. And nobody would accuse you of being feminine because you are so big." Well, Duke tried the walk and did it from then on. Working with all these people was what I, as well as the other actresses and actors, did for a living. To us it was just another job.

T.S.: What changes have you seen take place in the movie business? How does Hollywood today compare with the Hollywood of the 40's?

D.A.: Just before I came here to Cleveland, I went out to Twentieth-Century Fox to pick up a film. Well, it was heart breaking. Not much action there as in the other studios. The lots are not being used as they once were. Most of the filming done is for television and most of the movies are being shot on location. Back in the 40's Hollywood was a "busy" place. Movies being made right in the studios and people all around — now when you make a movie, you go on location. So, Hollywood today is really not the same old Hollywood of my day.

T.S.: There seems to be a period in your career that was somewhat less productive as far as movie making. What was the reason for this?

D.A.: Nobody ever came right out and told me, but I began to drink quite a lot. Once my lawyer told me that I was drinking too much, but at the time I didn't think so. Well, I began to get a reputation for drinking and I guess the studio thought that I might not be able to finish a picture because of drinking. So fewer roles and fewer

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FOR JOSEPHINE, Who Didn't Allow Her Picture Made

I

Well-worn,
The oiled features
Of your face
Were rubbed,
Polished into place,
Softened, like silver,
Into ebony patina.

Your hands,
Stiff-jointed and swollen
From too many years
Washing our dishes.
Wiping my tears,
You mothered me,
Maid me less lonely.

II

Paul's vision
Was clearer to you;
No scales blackened those eyes
That saw more pure than white.
God gave me a gift
For cleaning other folk's mess;
Now take this icebox —
I pray and cleans
And prays some more,
All happy just to think
How sweet it's gonna smell,
How pretty, filled with food.
A gift for being glad, I say.
Toting home our leftovers —
Discarded dresses,
A table with three legs —
Certain somebody could use it;
Wasting nothing,
You saved me up,
Rescued me like ravelings
Of string and paper
Hidden in apron pockets.

III

Don't talk foolish,
Believe all you hear.
Most likely, they sets up
Out in Arizona or somewheres else
To make it look like
They done been through space.
Never mind newspapers;
I know what's true.
The Book says,
Old John he talkin',
In them last days
There's gonna be
Blood on the moon.
So here's the sense of it:
If he really done set foot
On old man moon
Then that's the blood
And the Saviour would be back
Instead of us arguin' in this kitchen.
Don't be disputin' revelations.
Careful now, don't drop that plate;
Your Mother sets a store by it.

IV

Sick and sore
From warring within,
There are scars
The surgeon never left;
You soothed these wounds,
Cold cloths for the fevered head,
Coal claws smooth white sheets,
Gentle clucking sounds
Starting at the back of the throat;
Eat, you urge,
Just a little for Josephine;
Faith fed in with every spoon,
Your old medicine moves with magic.

V

From your house set back
Deep within the projects,
A well-spring of hope
Bubbles fresh through
dusty Delta mornings;
Before the sun announces
A new day of old tasks
You creep cold
From tattered covers
To cook for the Old Sister,
Bed-ridden, two doors down;
Mending done,
The room set to rights,
Verses read,
Uniforms freshly starched,
You march out
To glory in the grime
Of paler lives.
A tribe of warriors
Raised you up.

VI

Holidays you take him in;
Student from Africa,
His face shines with loneliness.
You fill him up
With scripture and baked chicken;
Long into the night
You share stories
Of life in the fields
Before you found a home
In other women's kitchens;
I will write to my Mother, he says,
That in this country
I find a good lady,
Someone who is satisfied; and
In Nigeria they sing your name.



Photograph by Rebecca Hood-Adams

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER:

Travis Salley's
Vision of
Wildflowers

by Rebecca Hood-Adams

"Flowers are the sweetest things God ever made and forgot to put a soul into."

— H.W. Beecher

The phone rings in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Travis Salley of Cleveland. It's an alert. Time is critically short, so the Salleys hurry to load his equipment into the car. They drive hundreds of miles across the state as Margaret Salley acts as a spotter for her husband who is red color blind. Doubling as navigator for their expedition, Mrs. Salley eyes the bright burst of color along the roadside, just as their caller had advised. They are not too late. Travis Salley pulls the car to a halt and takes out the tools of a hunter: hip-length waders for sloshing through the damp lowlands and a camera armed with color film and a close-up lens. The Salleys are stalking Mississippi wildflowers and one more rare specimen is now a captive of the camera.

For most Deltans traveling the highways, roadside gulleys go unnoticed except in the Spring

when the profusion of tiny, bright yellow butter cups carpet the land. However, Travis Salley, whose avocation is wildflowers, sees with a kind of telescopic vision which focuses in on the minute blossoms. These are not weeds when seen from Salley's perspective, but Nature's masterpieces. Some like the cardinal flower are as rare as Rembrandts; others are less discriminating, like the lowly jimson weed that thrives in barnyard manure. However, all are art, worthy of preservation. As an amateur photographer with over 9,000 slides, mostly color close-ups of Mississippi wildflowers, Salley is a one-man curator of botanical artistry.

Growing up in Webster County, Salley teases that as a youngster he early "came in contact with plants — a peach tree limb!"

"I was reared on a farm near Alva," he recalls, "and plants were just a part of our daily life. Of course, those cockle burrs in the cotton fields didn't interest me then the way they do now that I photograph plants for a hobby."

Salley has lived in Cleveland

since 1941. "I left home," he says, "and this was as far as I could get on the money I had. I had intentions of coming down here to the Delta and getting rich and going to Delta State to study, but things didn't work out that way."

Instead, he married Margaret Salley who grew up on the Delta and Pine Land Plantation in Scott, and understood his love of nature. "I was originally a river rat from over at Scott," she laughs. Together, they reared two sons, James and Tom. And they raised plants — hundreds of them.

Mrs. Salley claims to not really be involved with her husband's passion for flowers, but she does have her favorites, such as the wild yellow azalea and the Indian pink. Travis Salley says his wife keeps a sharp watch from her sewing room window and is the first to report some new bloom in the garden below.

And what a garden it is! Salley has converted his entire back and side yards into a living laboratory where he experiments with different varieties of wildflowers. Every inch is covered with plants and small red flags are used to tag the specimens.



Photographs by Travis Salley





Granddaddy's backyard wildflower beds are favorite sites for the special dreams of four-year-old Cissy and nine-year-old Joey.

Salley keeps records of the plants' common and scientific names, as well as details concerning growing conditions. So widespread and varied are the wildflowers growing in Salley's yard that on almost any given day of the year something is blooming. "This way I don't have to mow my lawn," he jokes as he guides visitors down narrow pathways.

Self-educated, with one of the largest private collections of wildflower slides, plants, and books in the state, Salley is a walking reference shelf of plant lore. He warns children away from the strychnine-laden Indian pink and recommends touch-me-not as a cure for poison oak. A modest man, Salley credits most of his knowledge to people like Dr. Robert Stewart and Dr. Henry Jacob, both of Delta State University.

"They encouraged me," says Salley. "Dr. Stewart comes by the house every now and then to help me identify some new wildflower. And when I was first getting started,



Armed with his camera and a close-up lens, Travis Salley stalks rare wildflowers to preserve their beauty in print.

Mrs. Sonny Blakeman was working at the library. She really helped me out. I'd bring in a plant and she'd find picture books so I could match them up."

Still not satisfied with his knowledge of wildflowers, Salley comes in every afternoon from his job at Sanders Elevator Corporation and by-passes supper to head straight for an inspection of that day's progress in the yard. "I go out back and get my mind off everything," says Salley. His thick black eyebrows knit in quizzical contrast to his silver hair as he putters amid the milkweed.

Experimenting with wildflowers neither common nor native to the Delta region, Salley examines a brilliant yellow bloom. "You hardly ever see black eyed Susans in the Delta, but they do grow well here," he mutters to himself. "I don't understand why there aren't more." He adds that puzzlement to the list of questions he's trying to answer in his backyard proving ground. How long will wild plants survive in a dormant state; will orchids grow in

the Delta; how many species are there of blue eyed grass? With each shovel-load of dirt, Salley unearths some new question.

Although he does dig some common varieties of plants for transplanting from their wilderness homes to his backyard for study, Salley is conservation-conscious. "I would never dig up a rare plant; I buy them from a nursery," he says. "Too many endangered plants have already been destroyed. It's getting to be kind of a trend to use wildflowers to landscape your yard because people think they can get something beautiful for free just by taking a shovel out to the woods." As part of his efforts to preserve the state's wildflowers, Salley is currently secretary/treasurer of the Mississippi Native Plant Society, an 80-member organization formed last year.

"I've always loved plants," says Salley, who began photographing them six years ago. "These slides are a way to share the plants with other people." Salley is much in demand as a speaker at civic groups, where he highlights his slide presentation with a recounting of where he found each plant.

"There's always a surprise in nature," says Salley as he gently cradles a tiny purple bloom between thumb and forefinger. "More people would see them if they weren't going so fast."

It's a slow business stalking wildflowers. But armed with a camera and a keen eye for details, Travis Salley adjusts to the rhythm of Mother Nature's timetable. There's a boyish grin on his face and a contagious enthusiasm in his voice as he bends on hands and knees to marvel at what would be a weed underfoot of the untutored. But then when viewed through Travis Salley's eye, the small blossoms of wildflowers loom large as redwood timbers. It's all in how you see it.

Rebecca Hood-Adams received her Master's degree in English from Delta State University and her B.A. in journalism from Memphis State University. She has had articles published in several anthologies.

WEBSTER'S: By Any Definition, A Success.

by Rebecca Hood-Adams



Skipper Hays (left) and Butch Montgomery

"Atmosphere" seems to be the trend nowadays in the restaurant business. Managers plug into a theme — converted warehouses festooned with cotton bales, sandbagged bunkers with airplane hanger motifs, riverboats with gangplanks at the entry — and the poor customer is served up "cutesy" atmosphere as a routine side order. That's fine when kept in its proper perspective, but however clever, the nutritional value of ambience is zilch.

For the diner who goes to a restaurant for good food and quality service, there's cause to celebrate. Webster's in Greenwood reflects a sense of professionalism too often missing in those dining establishments long on environment and short on first rate food.

"We're a restaurant first and foremost," says Skipper Hays, who is in charge of personnel at Webster's. "Our job is to cook good food and serve it in a prompt, personable manner. We're not geared for volume, and we're delighted to fix special orders on request. If we have it, we'll cook it; if we're closed, we'll open."

Hays is part of the management team out of Jackson brought in to open Webster's by owners Butch Montgomery of Greenwood and Bill Latham of Jackson. Latham's background in the restaurant business includes the proprietorship of Scrooge's and Wild Bill's.

The menu at Webster's is varied and offers items for diet-conscious patrons and serious eaters alike. Light luncheon entrees include eggs benedict at \$3.75 and the dieter's fruit fiesta at \$2.95. Quiche, baked from scratch daily and served with a green salad and a slice of fruit, is reasonably priced at \$4.15. Of course, there is the standard

charburger with fries and optional cheddar cheese and/or bacon (\$3.95).

Among the fish entrees are fried shrimp (\$8.95 for what Webster's calls their half dozen, or seven shrimp); oyster marguerite, baked oysters topped with fresh cooked spinach (\$5.95); and red-fish broiled in a lemon butter, white wine sauce (when available at market prices).

All beef, pork, and fowl are cut in house, cooked over real hickory chips, and served a la carte with satisfaction 100 percent guaranteed (except well done orders) or it's on the house. Prices range from \$11.95 for the strip steak to \$4.95 for the marinated, grilled boneless breast of chicken served on a bed of rice.

Although all the food we sampled at Webster's ranged from at least adequate to truly superior, their appetizers deserve special mention. For \$3.25 one gets a generous portion of potato skins — plain potato shells baked and fried with cheese, bacon, and jalapeno pepper toppings and a small bowl of sour cream dip. Even better is Webster's lightly battered and deep fried zucchini sprinkled with parmesan cheese and served with a horseradish sauce that will singe your shoelaces (\$2.10). For \$2.50 there's the fresh florets of cauliflower deep fried in a butter sauce and served with the same horseradish dressing.

Webster's appetizers offer a pleasing balance for the cocktail hour. We tried the frozen marguerita (\$1.50) and rank it the best found in the Delta thus far. Other libations include a bloody Mary that recommends itself (\$2.25) and a brandy ice featuring ice cream and nutmeg topping (\$2.75). There are daily discounts on drinks at lunch and additional lowered

prices during "study hour," 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The cheese soup also rates special attention. Served piping hot, the hearty soup's flavor was enhanced by a bean and bacon base.

One member of our party ordered the Hawaiian chicken (\$3.95) which is served stuffed in either a tomato or canteloupe. Once again, attention to small details like a chilled plate won favor. Chunks of pineapple gave the standard chicken salad recipe an extra zing. Unfortunately, a small piece of gristle marred an otherwise perfect dish. Webster's debones their own chicken; extra care in the kitchen would prevent such embarrassing occurrences.

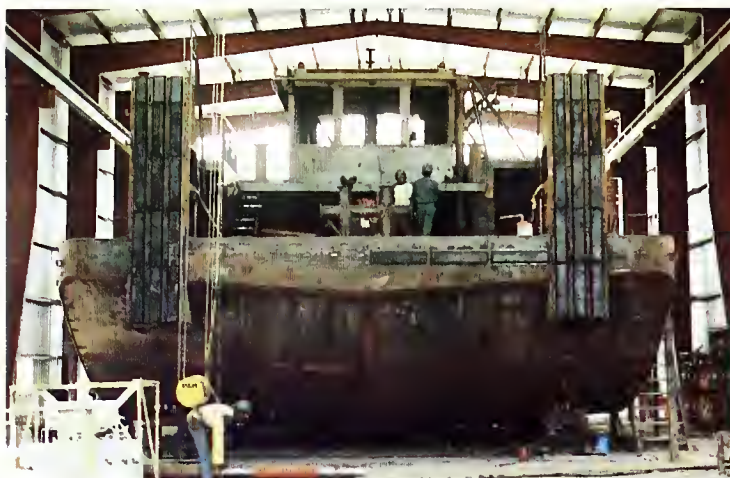
The Luncheon special the afternoon we dined at Webster's featured a tasty, well-prepared pork chop. The yellow cornbread was light and moist and the eggplant casserole deserves very high marks. Black eyed peas also came with the special, but these were frozen and were a disappointment. In an area of the country where black eyed peas are a tradition and in a season of the year when fresh vegetables are abundant, frozen peas seem hardly worth the trouble. The banana pudding was frankly too sweet and mushy for our tastes, but other diners rank it high, so it's dealer's choice on the dessert issue. We were surprised to find the pork chop served with a regular table knife, presenting an acrobatic cutlery feat unworthy of the meal. However, the waitress — who provided excellent service — quickly brought a sharp kitchen knife upon request.

While the truly superior food and service at Webster's deserves your

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Mv Fosti Eddie E. paints a cheerful picture in the channel of the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port with her jaunty new colors.



A towboat takes shape in the steel fabrication shop.



A partially-complete towboat hits the water with a colossal splash. Finishing work will be done with the boat in the water.

JANOUSH MARINE: A FAMILY ENDEAVOR

by Lillian Smith

"I've always wanted to be close to home," said Joe Janoush, "and own my own business." So after being away from home for six years while he worked for Mississippi Marine Towboat Corporation of Greenville as a naval architect and marine engineer, Joe came to Rosedale, Mississippi, in May 1978 to meet with the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission and talk about the feasibility of a towboat construction firm at the port. "I'd been watching the newspapers on the development of the port facility for some time," he said, "and I made my first trip with an idea and no capital resources. I didn't really expect any results."

However, Joe's brother, Brad Janoush of Cleveland, together with his real estate associate Leland Speakes and a local attorney Gerald Jacks, became enthusiastic about Joe's idea and put together a local



Mv Ginger Griffin, first Janoush towboat, under way in Rosedale channel for her maiden run down the Mississippi. Her christening was the occasion for a joyous and gala celebration.



Left: Joe Janoush, young, dynamic owner of Janoush Marine, Inc. Center: Mv Jim Pierce. Retractable pilot house lowers to deck level for passage under low bridges. Right: Young welder reflects enthusiasm which permeates Janoush shipyard.



group of backers including the president of the Port Commission, Brother Wilson, and accountant Bill Boswell. "I guess the timing was right," Joe remarked, "because by August 1978, we were clearing land."

"Two and a half years ago nothing was here except Andy Tidwell's fishing cabin and a lot of pecan and gum trees," he recalled. "Andy asked us not to tear up his garden with our bulldozers before he got his collard greens out." By October, however, Andy's greens and most of the pecans and gums were gone, and Joe had assembled a work force of eight and had laid the first keel.

Joe attributes much of the company's success to the hard work and loyalty of both his board of directors and his key employees, including his other two brothers, Paul and John. Paul, comptroller and purchasing agent, started working with Janoush Marine immediately. Although he hadn't finished college at the time, he commuted from Delta State University in Cleveland to the river between classes. "Paul takes a lot of responsibility off me," Joe said. "He always has."

During its first year, Janoush Marine built a stock boat for speculation. "We owned it for ten months," Joe said, "and if we hadn't sold it, we wouldn't be here today." But sell it they did — to Coastal Towing, Inc. of Houston, Texas, and its christening in August 1979 was the occasion for much celebration. "After Ginger Griffin officially christened the boat for Coastal Towing," Joe recalled, "my wife Frances christened it for the family, and Brother Wilson christened it — by breaking a fifth of bourbon instead of champagne on the boat's capstan — for the board of directors."

The risk had paid off, and Janoush Marine was on the road to success. Beginning with a small work barge tied up in the channel and a work force of eight employees, the company today employs 130 people and has replaced the small barge with a 220-foot concrete pier, a large construction shed, a floating dock for work barges, a 45-ton floating crane and dry dock facility. They have put nine towboats and one barge in the water and have three under construction. The company hopes to purchase ten

acres of land to add more fabrication facilities and a permanent office so that the present parking lot can be used for additional boat erection space. "These additions would allow us to go into barge construction," Joe added.

About four months ago John Janoush joined the company as personnel director and director of river operations for their new towboat, the **Mr. Tom**, which allows the company to do fleeting and harbor service. Then, in June 1981, when Jo Beth Janoush, Joe's mother, christened the **Mr. Tom**, named for her late husband, in a sense the whole family became involved in the business.

At the christening ceremony, Mrs. Janoush laughingly said, "I'm glad the boys have the responsibility of keeping up with the **Mr. Tom**." She explained, "The boys have always loved the river, but ever since they were old enough to fish without their dad, they were always losing our boat. Tom would start at Donaldson Point and go all the way to Benoit where he'd ask Chunk, the old black caretaker, 'Now, Chunk, in case you find my boat, do you know who I am?' And Chunk always replied, 'Yes, sir, you're the father of them four boys.'"

Laughingly, Joe admitted that he still has a problem keeping up with fishing boats. "I've bought five or six of them for the company, but I can't keep them. It's up to John to keep up with the **Mr. Tom**."

Commenting on how the four brothers get along working together so closely, Joe said, "We get along fine as long as they do what I say." He laughed and said, "We're all very open and honest with one another. We all get in our two cents worth. But as the business gets bigger, our jobs become more defined and there's less overlapping."

All the Janoushes, in fact, seem to enjoy their work. They're excited about the company's success. They like being together doing what they're doing, and they especially like being at home on the river.

Lillian Smith is a resident of Cleveland, Mississippi, and is a member of the English faculty at Delta State University.



Photograph by Noel Workman

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taken a lot more revisions than they asked for, but after I had written the revisions and sent it back, I got a letter of acceptance almost immediately, and a check thereafter so, that's in a capsule how it all came about.

M.R.: This is your first published work. I think aspiring writers would like to know if this was your first submission, and how many rejection slips you have received.

C.H.: I have two, I think.

M.R.: Were they for short stories?

C.H.: Yes. Now the book was turned down one time by a paperback publisher in Charleston, and it turns out be real fortunate for me she didn't take it. So really it turned out to be very lucky for me because I was able to go with Houghton Mifflin and I hope to stay with them for a while. She did not so much reject the book as being unsuitable for publication, but she said it was unsuitable for her at that time. She said she didn't think she would get a big enough turnover and paperbacks take a real high turnover. Well, paperbacks can really pay well. A lot of people are going directly into paperbacks now instead of going from hardback to paperback. You can make a whole lot of money in paperbacks.

M.R.: I have heard that **Sweet and Deadly** was not the original title of your book. What was the original title and what reasons did the publisher give for requesting the change?

C.H.: The title of the book was changed several times. I really don't know what it means. I didn't think of that title, and I was really mortified, so when I tell you some of the titles they suggested gave away the murderer, you will see what I had to work with. The original title of the book was **Dead Dog by the Side of the Road**. A long title — true, but I think it tied the book all the way together. I took a lot of care to tie the book all the way through down to the final image, and I was really dismayed when they told me — the salesman for Houghton Mifflin said that dead dog in the book trade meant a book that would not sell at any price. That is why they changed the title

of the book. I tried to hold out for **Dead Dog**. I tried **Deceased Canine**. They were not going to have that for any price. They sent me several lists and I was getting more and more upset. I am not what I think of as a temperamental person. But I was at the tantrum stage by the time they sent me the third list of really unacceptable titles, so when my editor called me up and said, "what about this?" I said all right. She said, **Sweet and Deadly** and I said, what does that mean? She said, "I don't know, do you like it?" I said, "Okay, go with that." I really just threw it away; I was so tired of dealing with it and nervous about it that I said forget it. So that is why the book is called **Sweet and Deadly**. There is no reason whatsoever. As far as I am concerned, it really doesn't mean anything. I still like my original title. I think of the book by my original title, and it took me a long time to get used to saying **Sweet and Deadly** without wincing. It really did.

M.R.: How much background in your book comes from Tunica, Coahoma County, or Bolivar County?

C.H.: As you can tell it is set in a town remarkably like Tunica, geographically anyway. The geography and, of course, the atmosphere. The people. The feeling you get from being in a small Southern town which I think is a great feeling. I am very pro-Delta, very pro-South. Real chauvinistic. Not to the point of blinding myself to the obvious problems the South has, but of course just soaking up that atmosphere all my life has, I think, been the most important thing in the development of me as a writer. The South is rich in character. It is certainly not any kind of sterile environment.

M.R.: Was there any significant factor which determined you would write mysteries, and do you feel that you will continue to write mysteries only?

C.H.: I think probably I will stay within the general area. I love to write scary things. I hate to be scared myself, but I love to scare other people and I love to read

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Transition
At
Greenville's



Delta Democrat Times



Delta Democrat Times

by Coleman Warner

It's been a year and a half since a newspaper group called Freedom Newspapers, Inc. took over ownership of the Greenville **Delta Democrat-Times**, the publication that over the years has outraged many traditional Deltans and attracted international attention with the civil rights stands of Hodding Carter, Jr.

There has been some negative reaction to Freedom Newspapers' ownership — some remarks about the paper's style of news coverage, and skepticism as to whether a publication owned by an outside newspaper group can be sensitive to local needs. But for the most part, the transition has gone smoothly. Reporters are filing their stories, circulation and advertising are said to be up slightly, and the **Democrat-Times'** leadership doesn't seem to have many enemies — the threats that were routine during the Carter years are now gone.

Among some of the more conservative elements in the Greenville and Delta community, there is a collective sigh of relief simply that Hodding Carter, Jr.'s influence is no longer felt at the local paper. However, what many Deltans haven't yet realized is that the new **Democrat-Times** owners are no less radical than was Carter during his years of fiery civil rights editorials; in some respects, the Freedom group is certainly more radical.

The newspaper group's radicalism comes in the form of "libertarianism," a philosophy described vaguely as "personal liberty without outside interference."

This editorial philosophy — to which the Freedom group adheres strictly — advocates some unusual proposals, such as the elimination of majority rule and most forms of taxation. But contrary to Carter's views, the Freedom group's philosophy will likely find a setting of acceptance in the Delta.

That's not because Delta residents won't disagree with the paper's editorials; they often will. The key is that the **Democrat-Times** advocates a return to traditional means of handling an issue that remains the most sensitive in the region: race.

Publisher Charles Fischer knows how to talk to people; he knows

what leaves a polished impression. He speaks smoothly, in an easy, gentle tone, smiling often. Rarely raising his voice, he seems to make a point of remaining in control. Fischer allows the interviewer plenty of time, and his talk is refreshingly straight-forward.



Hodding Carter, Jr.

Fischer, 33, now calls the shots at the **Delta Democrat-Times**. For years Fischer has been an important news executive for the Freedom Newspapers, a publication group based in Santa Ana, California, that now boasts ownership of at least 31 papers in 11 states, with a combined daily circulation of more than 800,000.

Founded more than 75 years ago by the late R.C. Hoiles, a newspaperman described as "a fiesty, dedicated advocate of individual liberty," the Freedom group is said to be the only newspaper chain espousing libertarianism in a pure form.

Freedom Newspapers put an end to a 44-year Carter era at the **Democrat-Times** when its executives purchased the daily for a reported \$16 million (in announcing the sale, neither the Carter family nor Freedom would confirm the purchase price, and recently Fischer said \$16 million "may be two to four million off").

The **Democrat-Times** looked like a wise addition to the Freedom group, the publisher said, because the newspaper is of the size the group likes to buy, and because Greenville is a city with good growth potential and a strong agricultural-industrial base.

The publisher said he never intended to "try and fill the Carters' shoes," and that the community's response to the new ownership has been "supportive." He added: "We

had a lot of comments that they were ready for a change. Everybody likes to see changes in a newspaper."

Actually, Greenville is very much divided in its view of "changes" at the newspaper. Community feeling seems to correspond largely with views of the Carter family's previous style of journalism.

Recalling the community's polarized view of the Hodding Carter, Jr. editorship period, one long-time resident said: "There were some groups in the area who, oh, thought he was wonderful, and others that couldn't bear him. There was never much middle ground."

A local farmer said he supports the **Democrat-Times'** new ownership largely because it "doesn't dwell" on the race issue like the Carters have. "He (Carter) would get the race situation and all that going all the time, I think because he thought the people up North would be interested."

Others speak out strongly in defense of the Carter period, either because they feel the family's stands were an essential stimulus for change in the Delta, or because they came to know and respect the Carters on a personal basis.

"He was gutsy," one downtown businessman said of "Big" Hodding Carter, who preceded his sons Hodding III and Philip in the editorship. "He would write about things and 15 years later those things would come to pass. Some of the people around here have a hard time stomaching that."

Aside from the opposition of some Carter "loyalists" to the ownership change, Fischer faces a high level of community skepticism toward control of the local paper by a newspaper group. Some believe ownership from the outside automatically results in loss of the personal touch.

"The Carters had a deep love for this community. These people know very little about this community, and that reflects," said Mayor William Burnley, Jr. "This is a company newspaper, whereas the other was a family-owned newspaper."

But Fischer says it's untrue that the **Democrat-Times** is now less sensitive to the community. In fact, he claims it's more attuned to local needs and desires.

The publisher said there's "really no connection" between the **Democrat-Times** and the Freedom group's home office on a day-to-day basis — decisions on editorial writing and news coverage are controlled locally.

It's unclear just how the **Democrat-Times'** coverage of local issues differs from the style of news gathering under the Carters. Some local residents say there hasn't been enough space given to local reporting. Others say local reporting has improved. One resident says the sports section has improved, and another insists that the paper is too small.

Mayor Burnley said that although the newspaper often attacks city government editorially, it basically has been accurate and fair in its news reporting. On the other hand, Malcom Walls, public relations director for Mississippi Action for Community Education (MACE), an activist group, said the **Democrat-Times** hasn't adequately dealt with issues affecting blacks and the poor. Many local residents say they haven't done enough



Charles Fischer

reading to make a fair judgment.

It seems that most residents of Greenville and the surrounding area have little or no understanding of the Freedom group's libertarianism. The editorial philosophy, addressed in the first editorial under new ownership, was described as the belief that "everyone should enjoy and control the fruits of his or her own labor without undue interference or dictation from the government."

The brief definition had a harmless ring to it, and clearly was designed to offend no one on the first day of publication. But asked for specifics, Fischer provided



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details on some of libertarianism's applications that may seem revolutionary.

Taxing, for example, in almost every form, amounts to "stealing" and should be eliminated; a system of majority rule by voting is unjust, since majority rule may inhibit individual freedom; there ideally should be no elected officials; there should be no land condemnation, and no required permits for use of private property.

Despite the radical nature of some libertarian ideas, they likely will be seen more as intriguing than a threat by the community. Freedom's executives say the editorial stance won't spill over into the news pages (although such would be a rare feat in the news business).

Fischer himself doesn't vote, but he said elections will always receive coverage, and government actions will be reported.

"Whatever people talk about is what we put in the newspaper," regardless of the newspaper's editorial stance, Fischer said.

In its specific application to civil rights and the "race issue," the libertarian stance represents a landmark switch from past editorial policy under the Carter leadership. Fischer said libertarianism supports the abolishment of public welfare, contending social relief efforts should be left to churches and the Salvation Army, and it advocates the removal of public school taxes on families that have placed their children in a private academy.

Fischer said libertarianism also supports the elimination of a minimum wage requirement. The publisher said periods in the past when a minimum wage standard wasn't imposed in the Delta apparently didn't result in too much hardship for black field workers.

"They're not starving to death, apparently, or they would go somewhere else to work," he said.

In essence, the newspaper advocates the removal of economic support systems that have become vital to the black community in the Delta. Few of these issues have come to the surface since the Freedom group's arrival in Greenville, but they will.

Fischer said that "I really don't try to distinguish between the black community and the white community. We really have no basis for distinguishing between the two."

To that statement, MACE representative Walls replied: "I think that's very idealistic, but it's not the situation now. It's very much black and white. You can't eliminate the problem by being idealistic."

Fischer said he believes racial prejudice is wrong, but he opposes the idea that all citizens should foot the bill for the betterment of conditions for one group. The fact that an economic system based on slavery largely laid the groundwork for current social and economic troubles changes nothing, he said.

"Is it right for the government to come back and steal from me? Do two wrongs make a right? I would say no," he said.

"Stealing is wrong. It breaks one of the ten commandments."

Coleman Warner is a freelance writer and photographer from Meridian, Mississippi.



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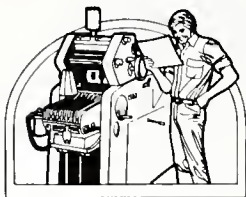
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Continued from page 15

prime consideration, the atmosphere is available if it's affectation you're after. With an eye toward puns on their name, Webster's menu is designed like a dictionary. Old wood and gleaming brass, coupled with bookshelves stocked with time-worn books, provide an inviting setting. Additional touches — such as the freshly cut zinnias in small vases on each table and the pewter-like appointments — demonstrate the care management takes to consider the tastes of the customers.

Located in an old house at 216 West Claiborne, Webster's occupies the site of a former restaurant, Jubilee's Patio. However, the improvements at Webster's are notable — little things such as replacing the wrought iron tables that formerly wobbled across the brick patio floor with sturdy, ample-proportioned wooden tables and chairs. If you remember the location for its teenage crowd or noisy atmosphere, try again. You'll find Webster's means what it says when it proclaims itself "a

restaurant first." Entertainment is offered from 8 p.m. until midnight and during lunch at the end of the week, but the low-keyed tones of Jackie Pearson at the electric piano are designed to provide a soft, contemporary backdrop rather than an ear-splitting addendum to dinner.

On the whole, we define Webster's as one of the very best new restaurants in the Delta and suggest you look them up soon. The owners are investigating opening similar establishments in nearby towns, and we wish them every success. Quality restaurants such as Webster's are always a welcome addition to our area.

Webster's is open 11 a.m. until midnight Mondays through Wednesdays. Closing hour is 1 a.m. Thursday through Saturday. It does not open for business until 4 p.m. on Saturday and is closed on Sunday. However, management will open during other than regular business hours if you phone 455-1215 to make arrangements for a private party. Reservations are not needed.

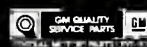
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mysteries. They are the only native American writing form. I am very strongly against the view of mysteries as throw-away garbage. The best writing in America now is being done in the mystery field. I am not speaking of myself. I am speaking of some of the great writers that have never been equalled even in England, though the English took it over and made a whole new thing of the mystery. They are delightful, but I think mystery writing is a native American field and I think it is a fertile one that should not be disregarded. It is literature.

M.R.: Is writing difficult or does it come easily for you?

C.H.: Some days, yes. Some days, no. Some days, I write ten pages and some days I sit there and stare at the typewriter and turn it off and on. Go get a Coke.

M.R.: Do you write only during the day or are you also a night writer?

C.H.: Oh no, I am not a night writer! I am a very early morning person, and I try to start work by 8:30 at the latest. I finish by 10:30 or 11. Some writers write all day. I don't know how they do it. I could not ever do that, but some writers do. Dell Shannon, for example shuts herself up in her house and writes the book. When the book is over, she goes out. I wish I could do that but I can't. It takes her about two or three months. That's it. She's through.

M.R.: You have very concise descriptive powers.

C.H.: Well, thank you. My favorite passages involve the tilted forward walk of Molly and Salton's approaching everything at an angle. I formed a definite visual image of these two characters. I gave Molly the facial features of a friend of mine who has Molly's walk and who is also well endowed up front.

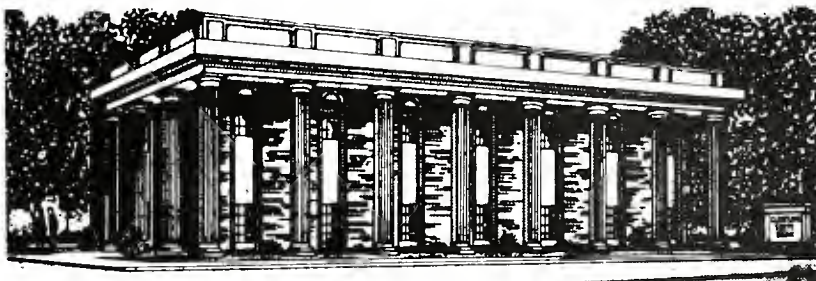
M.R.: There was very little profanity and only a pinch of sex in your book. Would this have anything to do with your up-bringing or religion?

C.H.: No, No, I write what I want. I did not set out intending to write a clean book. That just happened.

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M.R.: Do you think there really are secrets in small Southern towns?

C.H.: Yes, I do. I'm sure there are a lot of things I haven't found out. Of course, a lot of things are known, but I do think it's possible to keep secrets from at least a large percentage of the population for a certain period of time. It's gotta be, because otherwise why is it a surprise when you find out something. I mean you have to have time to develop the secret so that you can be surprised when you find out about it, and people seem to be. Do you know what so and so is doing? No, I didn't know that, so there must have been some period when it was relatively unknown.

M.R.: Is the setting of your second novel also in the South?

C.H.: It will be in the South, but not necessarily in the Mississippi Delta. This book does not depend nearly so much on geography. I think my idea of **Sweet and Deadly** is that it depends very heavily on the interaction of the land and people, which is something I always thought — I grew up out in the middle of a cotton field. I think the land — to the people here in the Delta — has a very unique relationship that has spawned very good things and very bad things, but I do think the land and people here interact. The next book is not nearly so much on that. It involves people — lot more people and personalities — lot more heavily than a restricted small town setting does generally. These people are more cosmopolitan, to some degree, though it is set in the South, but not in an extremely small town again.

M.R.: When will this book come out?

C.H.: Whenever I finish it. I am about halfway through. I'm gonna restart it, I think, which will mean a real slow period, followed by a period of real intense work. I am hoping to finish it by March and then we'll see who will take it. Naturally, Houghton does have an option on this book.

Marv Ross is a resident of Clarksdale and has studied creative writing at Delta State University. This is her first published work.



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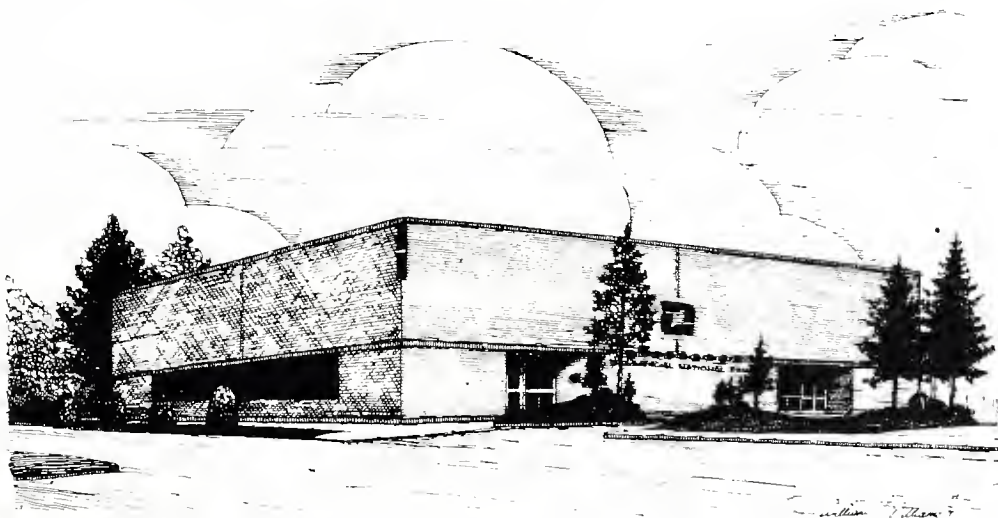
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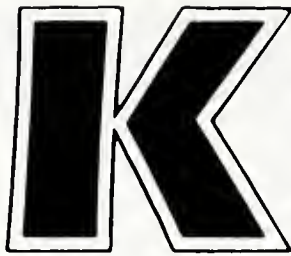
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Home Yard in Autumn

Fred V. Davidow

Our yard was dusted with the first frost of October like the top of a cookie sprinkled with confectioner's sugar. The mounds of brown leaves, fallen from the water oak tree in the backyard, were pitched like wigwams covered with white hides on the ground abutting the street. In modesty the pale yellow sun hid behind the curtain of houses on the eastern side of town while it rubbed the chill off its face with finger-like rays. When the sun cleared the shivering tops of the naked oaks half a block away, it stuck out its fiery tongue and licked up the frost. The khaki-colored grass by the side of the house now lay like a bristly straw doormat welcoming me to autumn.

The outer garment I put on this day was a thick corduroy shirt that fit me like a lumber jacket. Mother trembled as I, to her mind, under-clad, charged outside into icebox-cold air. But I felt unintimidated by the prickly wind that rattled the branches of the water oak, gaunt as a skeleton on a Halloween costume.

As if the sulfurous yellow corduroy shirt had stored the heat of July and August in the pigment of its fabric, it kept me warm. I proceeded to reassure myself that this autumn morning was no dream. Imitating my father smoking a cigarette, I formed a V with two fingers and pressed them against the corner of my lips. I sucked in air with a whoosh and my chest



ballooned. As I exhaled, a puff of frosty white vapor swelled before me. Here was a proof of the reality I sought, though it vanished in seconds, like a ghost. With tails wagging faster than a metronome our two cocker spaniels greeted me. The water in their pan could be a hard fact; yes, its surface glistened with a wafer-thin sheet of ice! I curved my lips into a wide, toothy smile, as happy as a jack-o'-lantern and just as aglow on the inside. At this moment my joy was not diminished by the knowledge that the sun would gobble that wafer before noon.

An Indian summer day is like a person facing a fire; one side is frozen and the other toasted. Father took me to school in the car. During the short ride the plastic seat cover and the door handle remained cold to the touch. Perhaps in the morning Mother was right in calling my corduroy shirt flimsy. But in the afternoon when I walked home, it was more like a parka.

Through the haze of twenty-five years I wistfully remember walking the sidewalk home as one gliding down a stream through Indian territory. Beside the curb of every yard were gathered cone-shaped piles of leaves, some set afire. In my mind's eye I saw clusters of wigwam villages from which rose curling ribbons of savory smoke. Indians were cooking succotash and banking the campfires to keep off the chill of autumn's early nightfall.

Once at home I transformed our backyard into a sanctuary. On the

ground near the water oak, w
branches arched over me like the
ceiling beams of a temple, I
constructed an oven out of bricks
about the size of a hatbox. It was
my altar. From the oak I received
the makings of a fire and the
offering. I laid its brittle leaves and
grayish brown twigs onto the base
of the brick oven. On top of them I
set two handfuls of the oak's small,
round acorns. It was a one-match
fire, since the dry leaves kindled
easily. Smoke rose through the
holes of the uppermost bricks in
straight columns and then
mushroomed. When the twigs
caught on fire and crackled in the
blaze, the acorns began snapping
open like kernels of popcorn. With a
stick I rolled a roasted acorn out of
the oven. Its pumpkin-orange
nutmeat was so inviting that I took a
nibble. At once my mouth watered
to flush out the bitter taste. This
unpleasantness, however, did not
spoil my rites of autumn. As I
squatted on the ground in front of
the oven, I was content with
breathing in the essence of the
season.

Fred V. Davidow, a native of Greenville, currently serves as Rabbi at Benevolent Congregation (The Temple) in Atlanta, Georgia. Rabbi Davidow was educated at Tulane University (B.A.), at Delta State University (M.Ed.), and at Hebrew Union College (M.A.), Cincinnati, Ohio.

pictures were offered to me. Drinking became a problem with me, and once I realized what it was doing to me and to my career, I stopped. I told my wife that I was going to stop and I did for three years. Then when I was making "In Harm's Way" with John Wayne, I started drinking again and this time almost died. I was advised by the doctor that I had better stop. Well, I believed him and I have not had a drink in fifteen years. Now I'm very active in organizations which deal with alcoholism. In 1976 I attended a program in Washington, D.C., called "Operation Understanding" which was composed of one hundred well-known people all of whom were alcoholics. The main reason for the program was to make people realize that alcoholics are not irresponsible individuals, but individuals who have a disease — alcoholism is a disease. I make speeches around the country about alcoholism and I think it is important that we realize what alcoholism is and how dangerous it can be. It's the number one disease in the country. So, because of my drinking, my career was damaged. But that's over now and I have not had a drink since then.

T.S.: Do you think that the "pressures" of Hollywood contributed to your drinking problem?

D.A.: No, no. You have alcoholics in every occupation and I don't think that the picture business had anything to do with my drinking. This would have happened

regardless of what business I had been in at the time. I do feel that individuals in the movie business get more publicity than others might, so the public hears about our private lives moreso than they would hear about someone who is not in the "public eye." I don't think that there is any more drinking or alcoholism in the picture business than there is in any other business.

T.S.: How did being a well-known screen personality affect your family life?

D.A.: My family life was just about the same as anyone who is not in pictures. Yes, I worked with very well-known individuals, but so did they — they were working with me (laughs). Actors are just people like anyone else. We are not "gods," we are just people working in pictures for a living. My children played with the children of other actors. For example, my son played a great deal with Bill Holden's son and the children thought nothing of it. When you are around movie stars all the time, the glamour is reduced.

T.S.: What about your hobbies during the period when you were making your pictures? Did you have time to relax?

D.A.: Oh, yes. When you are under contract with a studio there are many times between pictures that you have lots of time to relax and pursue other interests. When I was not making a picture, I liked to sail. At one time I had three large sail boats and would enjoy sailing and visiting with friends, but sailing got so costly that I sold the boats. Now I just rent a boat. I also got very interested in gardening and worked quite a lot in the yard. I still enjoy these hobbies, although I don't get a chance to do either like I once did.

T.S.: You have stated that you are seventy-two. Why are you still working? Have you thought about retirement?

D.A.: I work because I enjoy working. Financially, I could retire, but to me that sounds somewhat boring. I made money in pictures, of course, but I also did well in investments and in real estate. So, I really don't have to work; I just enjoy it and hope to continue.

T.S.: Do you plan to make any more pictures?

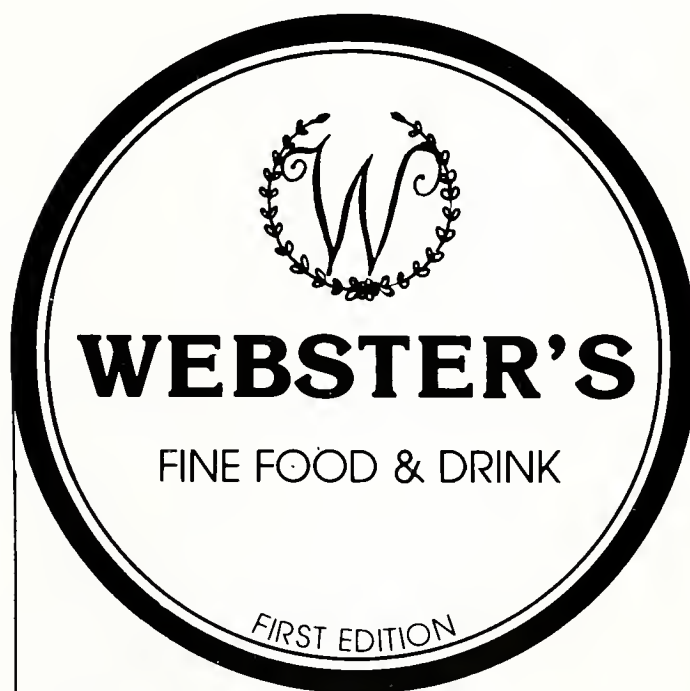
D.A.: I would love to! However, there are few parts for a seventy-two year old man. If a part did come — one that was a good one — you can be sure that I would take it.

T.S.: Do you plan to do any more college theatre work?

D.A.: Yes, I would do that. As I said, I enjoy working with the students.

T.S.: Well, they enjoyed working with you and sharing your experiences as an actor. You'll have to come back to Mississippi soon.

D.A.: Thank you. I enjoyed my stay and enjoyed working with you and your students.



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Dr. Ted Solomon is an associate Professor of Speech and Drama at Delta State University. He has directed three of the Guest Artist productions which include "Our Town" with Dana Andrews, "Send Me No Flowers" with Gary Collins, and "Cabaret" with Mary Ann Mobley and Gary Collins.



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